



Town of Arlington, Massachusetts
730 Massachusetts Ave., Arlington, MA 02476
Phone: 781-316-3000

webmaster@town.arlington.ma.us

Policies and Procedures Minutes 07/20/2012

Policies and Procedures Subcommittee, Arlington School Committee

School Committee Room – June 20, 2012 – 7:30 a.m.

APPROVED Minutes

In Attendance:

Subcommittee Members: Judson L. Pierce-Chair
 Jeffrey Thielman
 Cindy Starks

Superintendent: Dr. Kathleen Bodie

School Committee Members: William Hayner and Leba Heigham(Ms. Heigham left the meeting at 8:00a.m.)

Public: Greg Thompson, Sarah Hugenberg, Isabelle Rosenberg

A motion to approve the subcommittee minutes of 6/4/12 made by Mr. Thielman, seconded by Ms. Starks passed 3-0.

The subcommittee, with input from the others at the meeting, discussed Mr. Pierce's revised draft of File JC concerning open enrollment and choice zones. The consensus was that the overarching goal should be educational equity. Ms. Starks suggested that one of the first sentences under "Choice Zones" should be that once a child has been assigned to a school then the district will not be re-assigning that child again unless the parents themselves re apply for a change or if the child requires a programmatic change to a different elementary school. Mr. Hayner suggested that if parents want to voluntarily re-assign their own student they should be able to do so if space allowed. The consensus was that choice zones not carry with them a default school but that historical boundary lines will be considered among other criteria in making an assignment. Other criteria for consideration of assigning a choice zone student to a school should include: achieving class size equity, safety of the student, parent preference, neighborhood/peer equity, historical boundaries. Mr. Thompson noted that the policy should state the value of Arlington being a walking community with neighborhood schools. Ms. Heigham noted that Arlington is six square miles with an overabundance of elementary schools compared with other towns that size and that we have had historically a low standard for distance for busing. Mr. Thielman noted that low class size matters in terms of quality of instruction more so in K-2 than it does in grades 3-5. Mr. Thielman suggested that File JC have five headings: Attendance Areas, Re-Districting, Exceptions, Choice Zones, Open Enrollment. It was further noted that two other sections need to be developed: Timeline and Prioritization of assignments. It was decided that the policy should be revised using today's comments and that Mr. Pierce and Dr. Bodie will meet before the next subcommittee meeting to go develop sections on "timeline" and "priorities".

The subcommittee will meet again on July 16, 2012 at 12:30pm to discuss a revised JC and other related re-districting policies.

Mr. Thielman moved to adjourn at 8:43 a.m., seconded by Ms. Starks. Motion passed 3-0.